Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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R 061445Z AUG 77 FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9207 INFO AMEMBASSY SANA AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

CONFIDENTIAL JIDDA 5500

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PINT SA YS

SUBJECT: ALI OF PDRY VISITS KINGDOM

1. PRESIDENT RUBAYI ALI OF PDRY VISITED THE KINGDOM JULY 31-AUGUST 2. THE SAUDIS EXTENDED THEIR LAVISH HOSPITALITY AND THE VISIT DREW GOOD COVERAGE IN SAUDI MEDIA. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VISIT, THE SAUDI-PDRY JOINT STATEMENT STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE GULF AND RED SEA AREAS FREE "FROM INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS OR AMBITIONS." BOTH STATES AGREED TO INCREASE AND STRENGTHEN THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS.

2.DURING CALL ON KING KHALID BY AMBASSADOR AND DCM ON AUGUST 1, KING MENTIONED THAT SOUTH YEMENI PRESIDENT RUBAYI ALI WAS IN TAIF AND HAD JUST MET WITH KING. ACCORDING TO KING, RUBAYI ALI WAS QUITE FRANK IN ADMITTING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD MADE MISTAKES IN THE PAST. ALI SAID THAT AFTER EXPERIMENTING WITH VARIOUS LEGAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS, HIS GOVERNMENT HAD CONCLUDED THAT ISLAM PROVIDED THE BEST FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH YEMEN AND THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOW MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION. KING SAID THAT HE HAD REPLIED THAT ONLY THE PROPHETS DO NOT MAKE MISTAKES AND THAT WE ARE NOT PROPHETS. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD TOLD RUBAYI CONFIDENTIAL

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ALI THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE QUITE WILLING TO FORGIVE THE PAST MISTAKES OF THE SOUTH YEMEN GOVERNMENT IF THEY INDEED HAD HAD A SINCERE CHANGE OF HEART. COMMENT: WITHOUT BEING TOO CYNICAL, ONE COULD SURMISE THAT THE LIGHT SEEN BY RUBAYI ALI WAS THE GLINT OF SAUDI GOLD. IF SO, THE SAUDI TACTIC SEEMS TO BE WORKING. IT WILL NOW BE INTERESTING TO SEE IF SOUTH YEMENI CHANGE OF HEART IS FOLLOWED

BY A CHANGE OF POLICIES. END COMMENT.

3. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT ANOTHER TOPIC DISCUSSED CONCERNED RESETTLEMENT OF FORMER DHOFAR REBELS IN OMAN. SAUDIS AGREED TO FOOT THE BILL FOR THE COST OF THIS OPERATION.
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